

**Experience a Model Unit**  
**Model Unit 10.1: American Post World War II Drama (page 16)**

**Anchor Text**

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (Narrative Text – Drama)

*The Crucible*, a historical drama, reflects examples of how a dogmatic society's mistrust of nonconformity can result in injustice. As witchcraft accusations fly in Puritan New England, John Proctor must choose between his own personal safety and the truth.

**In addition add . . .**

**Informational Text**

**Media:**

Movie *Power of One*

[www.caringstrangers.com/powerofone.htm](http://www.caringstrangers.com/powerofone.htm)

**Activity #1:** As you watch *Power of One*, reflect upon the images in the video.

Quotes	Reflections/Thoughts
Not so long ago, a little girl in Alabama wanted to go to the same school as everyone else.	
And a gentle man from India wanted to raise consciousness without raising his voice.	
In East Germany, a man wanted to break free.	
And a woman traveled the world, giving hope to those who had none.	

This is the power of one.

To protect your home in the Amazon.	
To prevent poaching of the African Mountain Gorilla.	
To rescue harp seals in Finland.	
Or to care for the environment in our own backyard.	

## **Activity #2:** Read “The Dying Girl that No One Helped”

### **Essay**

Loudon Wainwright

“The Dying Girl that No One Helped”

Summary: A young woman was brutally murdered in a New York residential area while at least 38 people watched. Ever since, professional students of human behavior and amateurs alike have attempted to explain why no one was willing to become involved. In this selection, Loudon Wainwright briefly records the feelings of some of those who saw Kitty Genovese killed.

To judge from the bitter example given us by the good folks of a respectable New York residential area, Samaritans are very scarce these days. . . . if the reactions of the 38 witnesses to the murder of Catherine Genovese provide any true reflection of a national attitude toward our neighbors, we are becoming a callous, chickenhearted and immoral people.... An examination of the pitiful facts of Miss Genovese’s terminal experience makes very necessary the ugly personal question each of us must ask: What would I have done?

The story is simple and brutal. As she arrived home in the early morning darkness, Kitty Genovese, a decent, pretty young woman of 28, was stalked through the streets close to her Kew Gardens apartment and stabbed again and again by a man who had followed her home and who took almost a half hour to kill her. During that bloody little eternity, . . . Kitty screamed and cried repeatedly for help.... “Oh, my God!” she cried out at one point. “He stabbed me! Please help me! Someone help me !” Minutes later, before the murderer came back and attacked her for the final time, she screamed, “I’m dying! I’m dying!”

The reason the murderer’s actions and his victim’s calls are so well documented is that police were able to find 38 of Kitty’s neighbors who admitted they witnessed the awful event. They heard the screams and most understood her cry for help. Peeking out their windows, many saw enough of the killer to provide a good description of his appearance and clothing. A few saw him strike Kitty, and more saw her staggering down the sidewalk after she had been stabbed twice and was looking for a place to hide. One especially sharp-eyed person was able to report that the murderer was sucking his finger as he left the scene; he had cut himself during the attack. Another witness has the awful distinction of being the only person Kitty Genovese recognized in the audience taking in her final moments. She looked at him and called to him by name. He did not reply.

No one really helped Kitty at all. Only one person shouted at the killer (“Let that girl alone!”), and the one phone call that was finally made to the police was placed after the murderer had got in his car and driven off. For the most part the witnesses, crouching in darkened windows like watchers of a Late Show, looked on until the play had passed beyond their view. Then they went back to bed....

On the scene a few days after the killer had been caught and confessed, Police Lieutenant Bernard Jacobs discussed the investigation. “The word we kept hearing from the witnesses later was ‘involved,’” Jacobs said.... “People told us they just didn’t want to get involved,” Jacobs said to me. “They don’t want to be questioned or have to go to court.” He pointed to an apartment house directly across the quiet street. “They looked down at this thing,” he went on, “from four different floors of that building.” .... “It’s a nice neighborhood, isn’t it?” he went on. “Doesn’t look like a jungle. Good, solid people. We don’t expect anybody to come out into the street and fight this kind of bum. All we want is a phone call. We don’t even need to know who’s making it.”

"You know what this man told us after we caught him?" Jacobs asked. "He said he figured nobody would do anything to help. He heard the windows go up and saw the lights go on. He just retreated for a while and when things quieted down, he came back to finish the job."

Later, in one of the apartment houses, a witness to part of Kitty Genovese's murder talked. His comments . . . indicate the price in bad conscience he and his neighbors are now paying. "I feel terrible about it," he said. "The thing keeps coming back in my mind. You just don't want to get involved. They might have picked me up as a suspect if I'd bounced right out there. I was getting ready, but my wife stopped me. She didn't want to be a hero's widow. I woke up about the third scream. I pulled the blind so hard it came off the window. The girl was on her knees struggling to get up. I didn't know if she was drunk or what. I never saw the man. She staggered a little when she walked, like she had a few drinks in her. I forgot the screen was there and I almost put my head through it trying to get a better look. I could see people with their heads out and hear windows going up and down all along the street."

"Every time I look out here now," he said, "it's like looking out at a nightmare. How could so many of us have had the same idea that we didn't need to do anything? But that's not all that's wrong." Now he sounded betrayed and he told what was really eating him. Those 38 witnesses had, at least, talked to the police after the murder. The man pointed to a nearby building. "There are people over there who saw everything," he said. "And there hasn't been a peep out of them yet. Not one peep."

#### Questions for Discussion

1. What were some of the reasons given by the spectators for not becoming involved? Do you blame the spectators for what they did not do?
2. Does this incident tell us anything about human nature?
3. Do you feel that there should be laws requiring citizens to come to another person's aid?
4. Does thinking that everybody would act as these thirty-eight people did make it easier for the rest of us to be indifferent to pain and danger experienced by others? Why?

#### **Activity #3:** Listen to "Outside a Small Circle of Friends"

#### **Music Lyrics**

Phil Ochs "Outside a Small Circle of Friends"

In the 1960s, folksinger Phil Ochs wrote a song called "Outside of a Small Circle of Friends" with these lyrics:

"O look outside the window  
There's a woman being grabbed  
They've dragged her to the bushes  
And now she's being stabbed  
Maybe we should call the cops and try to stop the pain  
But Monopoly is so much fun  
I'd hate to blow the game  
And I'm sure it wouldn't interest anybody  
Outside of a small circle of friends"

The lyrics were a reminder of the murder of Kitty Genovese in 1964, an incident that began a national debate about the responsibility of the average citizen to come to the aid of people in danger.

#### **Sources**

<http://www.classzone.com/novelguides/litcons/crucible/guide.cfm>

[http://staff.bcc.edu/jalexand/Reading-5-7--Wainright-The\\_Dying\\_Girl.htm](http://staff.bcc.edu/jalexand/Reading-5-7--Wainright-The_Dying_Girl.htm)

**Activity #4:** Using one of the above selections, brainstorm possible strategies and activities.  
(Steps 4-9 of Designing ELA HSCE Units Flip Chart)

**Selection:**

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**Identify Genre Study/Literary Analysis**

**Reading, Listening, Viewing, Strategies and Activities**

**Writing, Speaking, Expressing Strategies and Activities**

**Ongoing Literacy Development**